

# Announcements!

Weekly Bible Study We invite each of you to attend the mid-week Bible Study, held upstairs each Tuesday evening beginning at 6 pm. We encourage you to attend these vital and exciting studies!

Church Bowling Night Due to many schedule conflicts, the bowling trip was postponed to a date in the near future.

Children's Church Our Children's Church is being reorganized and will soon be re-launched. If you have questions or concerns, please see Sarita Agee.

Member Registration We are updating our member registration, and we need your help. Please complete a member registration card and return it to Sis. Joyce Harris.

## Words of Wisdom: Flying...

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared, he sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no further.

So the man decided to help the butterfly, he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If God allowed us to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. We could never fly.

I asked for Strength.....And God gave me Difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for Wisdom.....And God gave me Problems to solve.

I asked for Prosperity.....And God gave me Brain and Brawn to work.

I asked for Courage.....And God gave me Danger to overcome.

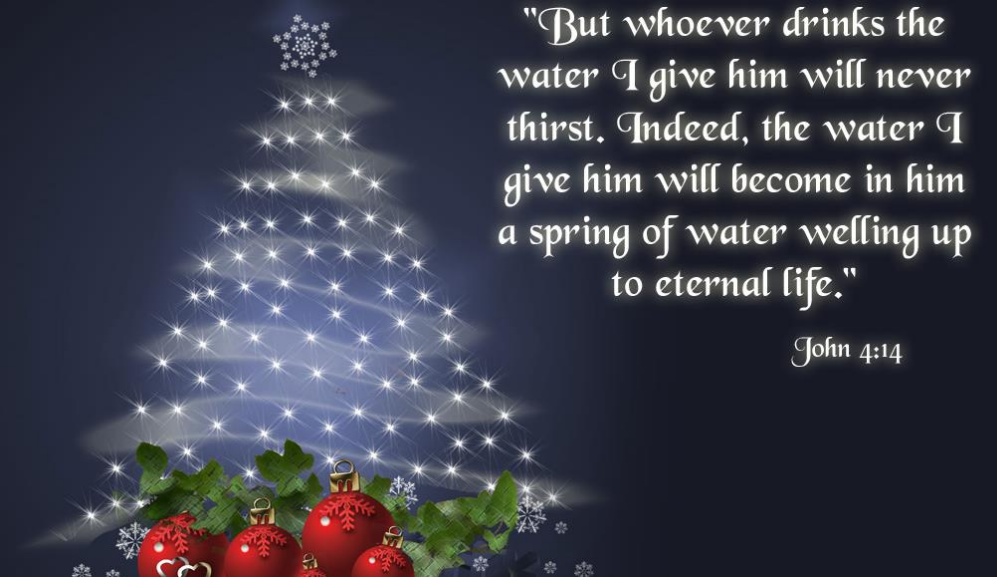
I asked for Love.....And God gave me Troubled people to help.

I asked for Favors.....And God gave me Opportunities.



Welcome to the

# Everlasting Covenant Church



"But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:14

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Follow Us:



"The Everlasting Covenant Church", Birmingham, AL

"THE\_ECC2015"

## Eric R. Agee, Jr., Pastor

December 17, 2017

### Vision Statement:



Enhancing Our Knowledge of Jesus Christ, Empowering All Believers for Ministry, and Encouraging Continuous Dedication to the Lord.

# Order of Services

*Fellowship | Refreshments — 9:30 a.m.*

*Sunday School — 10:00 a.m.*

*Morning Worship Services — 11:00 a.m.*

*Announcements & Recognition of Visitors*

*Call to Worship: Scripture Reading & Prayer*

*Tithes and Offerings; Prayer of Thanksgiving*

*Praise and Worship Selections*

*Sermon*

*Invitation to Christ*

*Benediction*

## *Winter Solstice...*

Taken from <https://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/earth/geophysics/5-things-didnt-know-about-winter-solstice.htm>

Dec. 21 marks the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. It's the shortest day of the year, and it's rooted in astronomical and religious significance. Many early cultures celebrated this as the day the sun "came back," commencing a period of longer days. Here are five things to know about the winter solstice.

1. It's the Day the Sun Stands Still — Sort Of: The word "solstice" comes from the Latin word 'solstitium,' which means "the sun stands still." We know it doesn't, literally (right, flat earthers?), but this is the day when the sun reaches the southernmost point as we see it from Earth and then "reverses" direction.

Since the sun doesn't actually move, here is what's actually happening: Earth doesn't orbit upright, but is instead tilted on its axis by 23.5 degrees. This tilt is what causes the four seasons. At the time of the winter solstice, the Northern Hemisphere is leaning the most away from the sun for the year.

2. One Man's Winter Solstice Is Another Man's Summer Solstice: The winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere is known as the summer solstice in the Southern Hemisphere. In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the shortest day of the year, and after that, the days start to get longer and the nights shorter. In the Southern Hemisphere, Dec. 21 is the longest day of the year, and the days begin to shorten and the nights lengthen afterward. Earth's closest point to the sun actually comes in early January. It may seem surprising that it's not summer in the Northern Hemisphere at that time but the difference between the sun at its farthest point (in July) and at its closest is just 3.3 percent, not enough to change seasons. It's the tilt of Earth's axis and not its orbit that gives the seasons.

3. It's a Specific Point in Time: Although most people will count all of Dec. 21 as the solstice, it is actually at a very specific time — the exact moment when the sun is directly over the Tropic of Capricorn (the imaginary latitudinal line between the equator and the Antarctic circle). In 2017, that time is 16:28 UTC or 11:28 EST. The date of the solstice can vary too — it's not always Dec. 21. It can also be the 20th or 22nd, and occasionally the 23rd. The last time the solstice was on Dec. 23 was in 1903, and the next will be 2303.

4. Christmas Celebrations Have Solstice Celebration Roots: You may know that many Christmas traditions are rooted in paganism, but the actual feast day of Christmas is very closely linked to a pagan Roman festival called Saturnalia. (Although the Bible doesn't give a date, historians believe Jesus was really born in the springtime rather than winter because the shepherds were watching their flocks outdoors at night.) Saturnalia was a weeklong festival to the god Saturn — the god of the sun, agriculture and time — which began on Dec. 17. Saturnalia was a time of feasting, merrymaking and gift-giving. It was so popular that many of its customs were incorporated into the celebration of Christmas when Christianity became the main religion of the West. Many cultures have a solstice festival that honors the return of the sun or a sun god.

5. It's a Time for Super-long Shadows: In December in the Northern Hemisphere, the sun is at its lowest arc across the sky which means long shadows from its light. The shadow you cast on the winter solstice is the longest you can make all year. Give it a try at noontime and see!

# Sermon Notes

Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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